

and staircase at the back of the gallery; a rose window, 16 feet in diameter, with twelve compartments richly carved, having the four evangelist emblems at the angles, fills the centre.

The clerestory is supported on columns of Bath stone, having capitals of rich and varied sculpture, executed with most delicate skill. Semicircular arches, and a row of triforium windows lead to the windows in the clerestory. The roofs of the naves and aisles are of open wood-work, the external covering being of slate.

The pavement of the centre aisle is inlaid in a series of ornamental crosses, and the chancel floor is covered with a mosaic pavement in rich and varied colours and design, approached by a flight of six steps from the nave. From the chancel, three Italian marbles steps, 18 feet in length, lead to the central apse, which has also a most splendid inlaid marble pavement, and is richly ornamented by marble columns, forming a *reredo* of seven panels, which are thus filled:—In the centre, the Cross, with the inscription, "He was wounded for our transgressions;" in the four adjoining compartments, the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Beatitudes; and in the two extreme panels, the Cross, and other scriptural ornaments illuminated by Mr. Osmond, jun., of Salisbury.

The font is of various coloured marbles. The desk, from which the lessons are read, stands in the centre aisle, supported by a large carved and gilt eagle, standing upon a pedestal ornamented with mosaic panels. The pulpit, which forms a quarter of a circle, and is concentric with one of the stone pillars of the nave, is perfectly unique. Nine marble columns, with carved alabaster capitals, form its support, surmounted by a frieze and cornice in Caen stone, with a row of twisted marble columns richly inlaid in curious tessellated ornamental work, partly in marble. The desk is of wood, richly carved in groups representing the Apostles, in bold relief.

The chancel rails afford a kneeling space of sixty feet in length, and the communion-table is the one hitherto used in the old church.

One of the chancel aisles contains a choir organ, recently enlarged and altered by Mr. Bevington, of London, assisted by Mr. Pringle, of Salisbury. In the apse of this chancel aisle is a large and massive parish chest of ancient workmanship; and the opposite chancel contains several large and handsome monuments of members of the Pembroke family, removed hither from the old church.

The country owes thanks to the Right Hon. Sidney Herbert for the erection of this costly structure, and we congratulate him on the manner in which his intentions have been carried out by his architects, Messrs. Wyatt and Brandon. The builders are Messrs. D. and L. Jones, of Bradford. Mr. Edmund Spurr was clerk of the works. The coloured decorations were executed by Mr. Willemet.

THE NEW THEATRE ROYAL, MANCHESTER.

This building, erected in Peter-street, in place of that in Fountain-street, lately destroyed by fire, was opened on the 29th ultimo. The architects are Messrs. Irwin and Chester, of Manchester, and the building has been constructed by Messrs. Pauling and Hensfrey. The external dimensions are 200 feet in length, on the longest, and 171 feet on the shortest side, and 69 feet in width. Exclusive of the rooms and hotel, at the back, the theatre is about 155 feet in length. Though the area little exceeds 1,400 square yards, the space is more available than that of the late theatre, which was nearly 1,800 square yards.* The internal dimensions are:—from the back wall of the centre box to the back wall of the stage, 120 feet, and between the side walls of boxes 55 feet. Mr. Beuzley has expressed his opinion,† that a theatre should not exceed 50 feet in diameter from box to box, or 55 feet from the curtain to the front box, considering this size the best for sound, and scenic effect. He prefers the form approaching the horse-shoe. In the new theatre, from the curtain to the

balcony of the centre box is 45 feet, nearly 4 feet less than the old theatre; and across the pit, between the boxes, the distance is 40 feet. The centre boxes are 15 feet deep, with six rows of chairs:—the upper tiers of boxes have seven rows of seats. The ceiling of the theatre is 48 feet above the floor of the pit. The stage advances towards the house in a curved form on the plan, 15 feet in advance of the curtain, and is 75 feet from the "float" to the back wall. The form of the horse-shoe is very slightly contracted at the proscenium, as in the English Opera House, and is presumed to be very favourable for the effect of vocal performances. The theatre is built of brick, with a lofty stone front in Peter-street. This consists of two Corinthian columns in *antis*, inclosing a recessed portico, and supporting an arch. The entablature returns round the back of the portion, in the centre intercolumn. The whole is surmounted by a plain pediment, not forming part of the order. The building, being isolated, has better arrangements for ingress and egress, than often we find in London theatres. The audience part of the house consists of four tiers, and the pit floor. On the floor, which has a fall, towards the stage, of 2 feet 6 inches, are the stalls, the orchestra, and the pit, which last extends under the boxes. There are two tiers of boxes, with the slips, and lower gallery above, and an upper gallery in the centre, formed within the roof. The supporting pillars to these tiers are placed at the back of the boxes, so that there is no impediment to the view, and it was here that all the skill of the architects was called for. Iron girders are employed to support the overhanging fronts of the boxes, tailing into the work an equal distance in the opposite direction, and being firmly screwed down at this extremity, and tied by a rod of iron to the lower part of the work, and further weighted down by a pile of brickwork. Omitting the hotel, the rooms in the theatre include two green-rooms, dressing-rooms, wardrobe, and costumier's room, treasury, manager's room, and others. The carpenter's workshop is in the roof over the pit: the property-man's room, the painting-room, 64 feet long, by 15 feet wide, with its two large "frames," each 40 feet by 22 feet, are above the stage and rooms at the back: the gas-fitter's and smith's places, and rooms of the supernumeraries are in the lower floors; and beneath the green-room is a tuning-room, where the band can practise, without being heard by the audience. The building has taken longer to complete than was expected, being commenced in October 1844: it should have been completed by the 1st of July last, and even now the saloons are incomplete. Adjacent to the saloon of the dress circle, is a cloak-room for gentlemen, and retiring rooms for ladies. These apartments are to be fitted up, in a costly manner, with marble chimney-pieces, with black and gold, and will be lighted by handsome cut-glass chandeliers. The dimensions of the saloon of the upper boxes are 30 feet by 17 feet, and in the centre the roof is vaulted in a semicircular arch, springing from an entablature, which is supported by Corinthian columns. The ceiling is panelled, and enriched with ornaments. The accommodation in the audience part of the house is as follows:—The stalls will seat seventy-seven persons; the seats in the pit, in eleven rows, will seat 500 persons. The dress circle contains 300 chairs, and is entered by nine doors. The next tier will accommodate about 350 persons, exclusive of two private boxes, which are on the same level. Neither of the tiers have the usual box barriers. The next tier comprises the lower gallery, and the slips: the former will hold about 450 persons, and the latter 110 persons. The upper gallery will seat about 300 persons. The private boxes are eight in number,—four on each side the house. The larger boxes are furnished with twelve chairs each, and the smaller with six chairs. Three boxes on each side are in the proscenium. One of these is the proprietor's box, having a stair adjoining, leading to near the station of the prompter, and a window, looking on to the stage. Each of the six proscenium boxes has an ante-room with fire-place. Though the number of persons able to be accommodated has been stated, as above—in the total 2,147 persons,—the number present on the opening night was 2,468 persons.

The stage has a rise of 2 feet 9 inches in

the 75 feet, from front to back; and in this part of the house are many improvements in mechanism. The side scenes or "flats," which at Drury-lane Theatre are preserved in the large space at the back of the stage, are here so contrived as to ascend or descend, and the ground has been excavated 21 feet below the level of the stage for the purpose. About 8 feet below the stage is a mezzanine floor, useful in the working of the "traps" required in pantomimes, and for the disappearance of spectres. The traps are all on an improved plan, and are worked by counterbalance weights. The largest trap is 30 feet in length, and will ascend above the stage;—it is worked by a large windlass in the basement floor. The whole of this part of the building is admirably contrived. The whole of the interior decorations were from the designs of Mr. Chester, and were executed by Mr. George Jackson, of Manchester. The style is Italian, with a character of *renaissance*. The fronts of the different tiers are enriched with scrolls of excellent design, executed in *carton pierre*, and gilded. There is great variety in the designs, and they are well relieved. The colours employed are almost exclusively white and gold. The proscenium is enriched with pilasters, surmounted by a circular pediment, its tympanum filled with elaborate decoration, and having on each side a gilded statue. The whole of these decorations are of the richest description, and are in the highest degree creditable to Mr. Jackson. It is stated in the *Manchester Guardian*, that upwards of 2,000 books of gold leaf were consumed. The large chandelier, and the smaller ones, were all designed by Mr. Chester, and were supplied by Mr. Agnew, of Manchester. They are of excellent design. The largest cost about 150l. As a provision against fire, a large reservoir has been constructed on the roof of that part of the building, which is behind the stage. The roof itself—by means of parapet walls, coated with a species of asphalt, termed *Paragua*, has been converted into one cistern, which will hold a depth of water of 18 inches, in all about 20,000 gallons. A large iron pipe descends from this enormous tank, with openings, one on the level of the green-room, and the other on the stage, near the hall door. Each orifice is prepared to receive a long canvas tube or hose, which is suspended close by, and can be attached in a few seconds.

Thus a copious supply of water is obtained, which can at once be directed to any part of the theatre. From inquiries, from parties present in the pit, on the opening night, we find, that the warming and ventilating arrangements are there of the best description. From a visit to the upper and lower galleries on another evening, we can assert, that the ventilation is much more perfect, than usually found in such elevated regions. This part of the work was executed by Mr. Wm. Walker, of Manchester. Cold air, being admitted into the basement, is there heated, and admitted separately to all the different parts of the house; the vitiated air is discharged by shafts, and apertures on every floor, and by a large aperture in the ceiling.—The cold air is admitted by two window apertures into the vault, in which is placed a large furnace. Over this is a water-boiler, with connecting pipes to heating boxes. There are five heating boxes, each of which contains upwards of 200 square feet of heating surface, within a comparatively small space; and to attain the same amount of heat, under the old plan, would have required a large chamber. Of this system we shall probably give some further account. From these boxes, five brick shafts proceed beneath the pit, in various directions, branching off to the different parts of the house, and by means of perforations in the floors, the warm air is distributed equally. There are internal openings, within the ceiling of each tier for the discharge of the vitiated air, and all these are connected with the main shaft, which is of considerable diameter, and passes out through the roof, above the aperture over the large chandelier.

The total cost, including land, building, furnishing, and fitting up, will reach 23,000l. The work is in the highest degree creditable to the architects, who have interested themselves in all the details with zeal and success. We are glad to hear that they were presented with testimonials on the opening night.

* We have to acknowledge the attention shown to us by the architects, during several examinations of the building, previous and subsequent to the opening. We suppose that their very arduous duties prevented their supplying us with the data, and dimensions, promised, and which we have here taken from the *Manchester Guardian*. But, we are assured by them, that the data given are substantially correct.

† Vide the Report of the Committee on Dramatic Literature. 1832.